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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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From Week to Week

Down on the family Farm. "Bernard M. Baruch, the wisest American I have ever met . . ." "Much of the credit for this is due to that wise statesman, that subtle politician, that first class administrator, W. L. Mackenzie King . . ."

—Mr. Randolph Churchill. *To-day in Europe*.

Mr. Baruch is sabotaging the "American" Loan; Mr. Mackenzie King is ostentatiously playing down Imperial unity.

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We trust that the widest publicity will be given in every quarter to the letter of Squadron-Leader Christopher Hollis, M.P., to the *Sunday Express* of May 5.

The letter is too long to quote *in extenso* in these columns but the main points are: (1) we are continually being told by Sir Ben Smith that shortage of refrigerator ships prevents us from receiving food from New Zealand and Australia. (2) The *Coptic* is a British refrigerator ship of 10,000 tons. Towards the end of last year she was taken off her normal Australasian run, and sailed from London to New York, empty. She was loaded with a cargo of meat, fish, fruit, vegetables, tobacco, candy, and soft drinks, and ordered to deliver it to the American garrison at Guam—much more easily reached from a Pacific port, and of course in no urgent need of food. Half way across the Pacific she was turned back on her tracks to Pearl Harbour. She arrived on February 16 to find her cargo could not be unloaded. She waited a fortnight, unloaded the luxury portion, and was ordered to take the remainder, the major portion, back to Norfolk, Virginia, where she unloaded it at exactly the same spot on which it had been loaded three months earlier. (3) She then left Norfolk empty for New Zealand, and is still on her way and has crossed a sister vessel returning to the United States from the Philippines for the purpose of unloading a cargo loaded in America two months before.

(4) These instances can be multiplied indefinitely.

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"All liberty consists in the preservation of an inner sphere exempt from State power."

—Lord Acton.

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Mr. Gallacher, our one titular Communist M.P., "thought up" and employed a really devastating gibe against Mr. Churchill. He called him Victorian. We were so appalled at the use of language such as this in the House of Commons that we pondered long on what he could have meant (beyond, of course, a detestation of the highest *general* standard of

living in the world, no coupons, no serious housing difficulties, no bombs, real whisky and beer, Gilbert and Sullivan instead of Sinatra and Bing Crosby and no "B." B.C.) Then we saw the light. In Queen Victoria's glorious days, there was nothing in Parliament remotely resembling Mr. Gallacher. My, my!

One of the enigmas of the present period through which (we hope) we are passing is the destination of the superior qualities of fish, meat, etc. It is quite impossible to suppose that the ratio of inferior descriptions of *e.g.*, fish to the total catch has greatly changed, and we are informed on good authority that the fishing grounds are better stocked, and catches are larger and easier, than for many years before the war.

But not once in months does the ordinary individual ever see sole, turbot, halibut or even plaice—in fact most of the fish available is difficult to name. Who is getting the good fish? Is it all going to Professor Laski's friends or does it come under the necessity for increasing our exports?

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The rejection of the French Constitution which provided for a Single Chamber is an event of historic and world importance. Together with one or two other political events of the last few months it provides some support for the hope that the Red tide in world affairs has reached full flood, is slack, and may be expected to begin to ebb. Single-chamber Government is closely connected with the prefix "mon—"—monopoly, money. It is the logical structure of dialectical materialism that human interests are purely economic. In fact, if not in form, we have nearly reached this form of organisation in this country. That is why our condition is so parlous.

"The recording and proposing of doubts has two advantages; the one, as it defends philosophy against errors, when that which is not clear is neither judged nor asserted, lest error thus should multiply error, but judgment is suspended upon it, and not made positive; the other is, that doubts once registered are like so many sponges, which perpetually suck and draw to themselves the increases of knowledge; whence those things which would have been slightly passed over, unless they had been doubted before, come now from this very doubting to be more attentively considered. But these two advantages will scarce balance this single inconvenience, unless well provided against; viz., that when a doubt is once admitted for just, and becomes, as it were, authentic, it presently raises up disputants on both sides, who transmit to posterity the same liberty of doubting still; so that men seem to apply their wits rather to nourish the doubt than to solve it."—F. Bacon.

PARLIAMENT

House of Commons, April 30, 1946.

FUEL AND POWER

Petrol (Supply and Distribution)

Sir Frank Sanderson asked the Minister of Fuel and Power if he will give a list of the liberated and other countries in Europe, respectively, where petrol is not rationed.

The Minister of Fuel and Power (Mr. Shinwell): According to my information, petrol is not at present rationed in Sweden, Switzerland, Portugal and Iceland.

Sir F. Sanderson asked the Minister of Fuel and Power the approximate amount of petrol consumed in the United Kingdom during the years 1937, 1938 and 1939, respectively; the annual consumption today under the system of petrol rationing; and, approximately, the amount of petrol being produced at the present time in countries whose currencies are the pound sterling.

Mr. Shinwell: The figures of petrol consumption in the United Kingdom during the years 1937, 1938 and 1939 were approximately 4,762,000 tons, 4,882,000 tons and 4,846,000 tons respectively. These figures were mainly based on information provided by the Customs of deliveries into consumption of imported motor spirit. The Customs are not yet in a position to give a comparable annual figure under current conditions, but in any event such a figure would include military requirements of aviation spirit and petrol for military requirements. As indicated in reply to earlier questions I do not feel able to segregate the quantities required respectively for civil and military. The production of petrol in countries where the currencies are the pound sterling is very small, but even the total production from the U.K. and British overseas refineries now operating in what constitutes the "sterling area" is substantially less than the total requirements of the United Kingdom and the various British overseas demands. These demands, which also include substantial military requirements, must also be met to the fullest extent possible from our own resources in addition to the requirements of the United Kingdom.

Sir F. Sanderson: Is it not the fact that the stocks of petrol in this country today are equal to, or in excess of, what they were prior to the war? Would the right hon. Gentleman either refute that or confirm it?

Mr. Shinwell: I could hardly give a firm reply to that supplementary question without notice. We have to take account, not only of the stocks available in the country, but also of the possibilities of further imports. It is as regards the latter that I find myself in some difficulty at present.

Mr. Stokes: May I ask my right hon. Friend whether, in his computations, he ranks the Aberdan refinery inside or outside the sterling area?

Mr. Shinwell: I should imagine the Aberdan refinery would be comprised in the sterling area.

Mr. David Eccles: Is it not a fact that the output of the Anglo-Iranian Company exceeds the consumption in this country?

Mr. Shinwell: That is precisely what I have said in reply to the Question. Oil from sterling sources would be quite sufficient, if imported into this country, to supply all our available needs, but we must take account of overseas needs and military requirements abroad at the same time.

COMMERCIAL BROADCASTS TO GREAT BRITAIN

Mr. Keeling asked the Prime Minister what steps he is taking to meet the threat of commercial broadcasting by American companies to this country from Eire, Iceland or the Continent.

The Lord President of the Council (Mr. Herbert Morrison): I have been asked to reply. It is the policy of His Majesty's Government to do everything they can to prevent the direction of commercial broadcasting to this country from abroad, and to this end they will use their influence as necessary with the authorities concerned.

PALESTINE (MURDERED BRITISH SOLDIERS, TEL-AVIV)

Earl Winterton (By Private Notice) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, if he has any statement to make on the murder of seven soldiers of the Sixth Airborne Division at Tel Aviv on 25th April.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. George Hall): On the night of 25th April, an attack was carried out by 20 to 30 Jewish terrorists in civilian clothes against British soldiers of the 6th Airborne Division who were guarding a car park in Tel Aviv. The attack began with the throwing of an anti-personnel bomb into the car park, followed by heavy bursts of fire from adjoining houses. Under cover of this fire, the guard tent was rushed and two soldiers inside were shot dead in cold blood. Four other soldiers were shot and killed by fire directed at the car park. One lance corporal was fatally wounded and died in hospital. Police personnel in an adjoining station opened fire on the attackers while retreating. The terrorists had systematically mined all the approach roads with anti-personnel mines which greatly delayed ambulances rushing to the aid of the casualties. While no arrests have been made of the perpetrators of this outrage, investigations are proceeding, and some 79 persons have been detained for interrogation. The town of Tel Aviv has been put out of bounds to British troops. This was a premeditated and vicious attack obviously designed to cause the maximum casualties. I endorse the High Commissioner's description of it as a coldblooded murder. I deeply regret this loss of British lives, and I know the House will wish me to express their deep sympathy with the relatives of the murdered men. Apart from one incident which is being investigated by the military authorities, the troops and Police in Palestine have shown exemplary forbearance, patience and courage. On behalf of His Majesty's Government I take this opportunity to express our high appreciation of the way in which British troops and Police are conducting themselves under the very difficult circumstances in Palestine.

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE BILL

The Minister of Health (Mr. Aneurin Bevan): . . . the present Bill does not rewrite the Lunacy Acts—we shall have to come to that later on . . .

. . . The general practitioner, quite often, practises in loneliness and does not come into sufficiently intimate association with his fellow craftsmen and has not the stimulus of that association, and in consequence of that the

general practitioners have not got access to new medical knowledge in a proper fashion.

... if the health services are to be carried out, there must be brought about a re-distribution of the general practitioners throughout the country.

... One of the first consequences of that decision was the abolition of the sale and purchase of practices. If we are to get the doctors where we need them, we cannot possibly allow a new doctor to go in because he has bought somebody's practice. Proper distribution kills by itself the sale and purchase of practices. I know that there is some opposition to this, and I will deal with that opposition. I have always regarded the sale and purchase of medical practices as an evil in itself. It is tantamount to the sale and purchase of patients.

... The doctors claim that the proposals of the Bill amount to direction—not all the doctors say this but some of them do. There is no direction involved at all. When the Measure starts to operate, the doctors in a particular area will be able to enter the public service in that area. A doctor newly coming along would apply to the local Executive Council for permission to practice in a particular area. His application would then be referred to the Medical Practices Committee. The Medical Practices Committee, which is mainly a professional body, would have before it the question of whether there were sufficient general practitioners in that area. If there were enough, the committee would refuse to permit the appointment. No one can really argue that that is direction, because no profession should be allowed to enter the public service in a place where it is not needed. By that method of negative control over a number of years, we hope to bring about over the country a positive redistribution of the general practitioner service. It will not affect the existing situation, because doctors will be able to practise under the new service in the areas to which they belong, but a new doctor, as he comes on, will have to find his practice in a place inadequately served.

Mr. Richard Law (Kensington South): The fact is that the doctor is to be paid, in part, by the State. He is to work in premises which are owned, staffed and managed if not technically by the State, by the State as represented by the local authority; and his field of work is to be defined for him by the State. I say that those three things add up to the beginnings of a whole-time State medical service. It is incomplete at the moment, it is still only embryonic, but it is the first step, and the step that counts, towards a full-time medical service.

I do not think it is possible to be surprised that so many doctors feel it is in fact that first step, in particular when one considers once again what is the declared policy of the party opposite. Here is an interesting statement from the Socialist Medical Association:

"The proposals in regard to the payment of doctors fall short of the policy we have advocated, and which the Labour Party has, in the past, accepted. We still insist that the best service, the perfect doctor-patient relationship, and the highest form of team work will be possible only when the service becomes one employing whole-time salaried officers, and we shall watch the basic salary system very closely indeed."

[HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear."] That is the statement, and the House has heard the reception which it has got from hon. Members opposite. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Do you agree with it?"] I certainly do not agree with it. It is hardly

surprising if, in spite of the soft and soothing words which the Minister has used this afternoon, the medical profession still believes that it is being driven along towards a full-time salaried State service, a form of service which is absolutely incompatible with the two principles I enunciated a few moments ago. Will the doctor be a better doctor because he is paid a salary? I say he will be a worse doctor, because all his prospects of material advancement will depend, not on the service that he can render to his patients, but on the impression which he is able to make on his administrative superiors.

Mrs. Jean Mann (Coatbridge): Is it not the case that his medical superiors will be his own colleagues on the medical practices committee?

Mr. Law: I do not think that affects my argument at all. It is not a question of who the administrators are, but of whether the practice of medicine as a science and an art will be made subservient to administrative considerations. I say that that is what happens when the doctor is paid a salary and that that does not make a doctor a better doctor. It makes him a worse doctor. From the point of view of the patient, who is the one who matters, it is far better that the material prospects of the doctor should depend upon the impression the doctor makes on the patient, and not on the impression he makes on his administrative superiors.

When these provisions become effective, if they become effective, the doctor will be under great temptation to make himself known to these people and these bodies, to seek their favour, to cultivate them. He will be under great pressure to limit the issue of certificates to his patients.

... What the Minister is doing by forbidding the buying and selling of practices is to remove one more material inducement which a doctor has to give the best service he can to his patients.

Mrs. Florence Paton (Rushcliffe): Does he serve for the love of it?

Mr. Law: That interruption is typical of the outlook of many hon. Members on the other side of the House. They do not think of human beings at all. They would never regard a doctor as a human being. They regard people as either black or white. They regard people as either black or white. They would say that it is perfectly right and proper for a miner or a building operative to be interested in the conditions of his labour, and in trying to improve his position and that of his family; that is right and noble, but they will not apply the same principle—at least the hon. Member does not seem to do so—to the doctor. The doctor is human, and just like the miner or the operative, he is bound to be interested in his material conditions, in the welfare of his family, the future of his children.

To deprive him, in his practice, of the inducement to improve his material position, to improve the prospects of his children, is to do harm, not to him but to his patients. It is to do harm because it will reinforce the tendency already begun, with the payment of the decreasing capitation fee and so forth, to sit back and look for his future and remuneration, not to an increase in the value of his practice, not to the impression he makes on his patient, not to the creation of goodwill. Again, it will force him to look to his administrative superiors. I believe that will have a very harmful effect upon the practice of medicine.

Viscountess Davidson (Hemel Hempstead): ... The rights of the minority must be respected, and no majority should

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TOUGH

The special Representative Meeting of the B.M.A. broke up on May 2 in an atmosphere of mutual congratulation.

The Doctors were convinced that they had achieved unity and that the result of their deliberations when conveyed to the Minister of Health would prove to him that he had something very tough to deal with in the Medical Profession.

An objective study of the agenda, however, and a record of the Resolutions passed reveals a situation which would be pathetic if it were not so dangerous.

On the first day an attempt was made by a few Divisions to get the general attitude of the doctors to the Bill stated in the form of an over-riding resolution.

This, however, was defeated and the meeting proceeded to discuss 262 different amendments and motions.

A copy of the agenda marked up with the fate of each one evoked a picture of such confusion that the Minister, far from being frightened, must have been considerably encouraged.

Brave words are spoken only to be modified by less brave words elsewhere. Principles are stated, to be denied a little later.

Motion 122 by Goole and Selby, "That this Meeting of the British Medical Association having considered and approved the Principles of the Profession, as laid down in the Council's Report, rejects the proposed enactments of the National Health Service Bill in their entirety," was withdrawn and the following substantive motion by Gateshead substituted and carried by only two dissentients, namely, "That while agreeing on the need for improvements and co-ordination of existing medical services this meeting disapproves of the methods proposed in the Health Bill to achieve these ends."

This was supposed to crystalize the general attitude of the Profession to the Bill. Nevertheless when Motion 216 by Belfast came up it was carried, and this was the Motion: — "That all persons should be compulsorily insured and a complete medical service should be made available to all who need it or desire it, provided that a State monopoly of medicine is avoided."

This is sheer impudence on the part of the Profession. It is not a function of the Medical Profession to advocate compulsory insurance. Indeed if it were aware of its duty as guardian of mental as well as physical health it would violently oppose any such measure. The resolution is all the more ludicrous when one refers to the amendment No. 119 by Guildford, referring back to Principle 3 of those enumerated in the Council's report namely: —

"The citizen should be free to choose or change his or her doctor, to choose, in consultation with his family doctor, the hospital at which he should be treated and free to decide whether he avails himself of the public service or obtains the medical service he needs independently."

Guildford pointed out that the Government's proposals conflict with this principle, *e.g.*, there is no provision whereby a patient may opt-out of the service.

This amendment was carried, yet the Belfast motion was also carried.

How can one take this "Parliament of Doctors" seriously? It cannot be said that pressure was brought to bear on this occasion by the Executive and the hands of the Meeting tied.

The Representatives had it in their power to take Motion 122 first and there was no pressure from the Chair to oppose this.

Nevertheless it was defeated by a considerable majority and the deplorable proceedings then dragged on for two days.

One observer present at the scenes of boyish enthusiasm with which the proceedings terminated, came away thoroughly depressed. The next phase will be the meeting between the Minister and the Negotiating Committee of a once proud profession to which Mr. Arthur Greenwood referred in the House of Commons later as "the employees."

Whether or not during the year or so in which there will be time for reflection, the profession will realize that a discussion of alternative methods of one's own execution is not a constructive activity, is any one's bet.

It may be that Mr. Arthur Greenwood's directness in stating that "Socialist Policy Marches On" and "that direction will be applied" will provide a stimulus to intellectual activity of a higher order than that shown by the Profession up to date.

Hard to Reconcile

The Sydney (New South Wales) *Sun* published the following on April 4 from its Freemantle correspondent: —

Wharf-labourers are intrigued by a cargo they are unloading from the motorship Port Jackson.

The cargo includes 100 cases of beef extract and 313 cases of herrings and tomato sauce, all of which came from England.

In view of the recent drive to provide food for Britain, watersiders find it hard to reconcile the food need of the United Kingdom with the export of food to Western Australia.

Baruch and Churchill

According to an Associated Press telegram of April 30, Presidential adviser Bernard Baruch has purchased for \$25,000 the portrait of Winston Churchill recently painted by Douglas Chandor.

The portrait is a study to be incorporated in Mr. Chandor's group painting of the "Big Three" at Yalta, originally commissioned by the late President Roosevelt and recommissioned by President Truman.

WAR: THE LABORATORY OF TRUTH

These imaginary scenes of 1920 are reproduced with a few small alterations, from the issues of "The Nation" published in the last quarter of the year 1917 and the author desires to express his thanks to the Proprietors and the Editor of that paper for permission to collect and present them in this new form.

In one of my early voyages of discovery amid the warrens of the war-bureaucracy, I came upon Paston, whom I had left some years ago at Oxford, a young philosophy don, one of the brightest and most enthusiastic exponents of the Pragmatist gospel. He explained to me that he had chucked the 'Varsity and was engaged in war-work. Seeing me smile and guessing the cause (for Paston had been President of the Norman Angell Club) he thought some explanation was desirable, and urged me to come into his "hut" and have a talk. I gladly accepted the invitation for I was interested to learn what line of war-work could have attracted Paston.

Pretending to be surprised at my surprise, he spun out quite a convincing story "Why the war brought me the chance of a hundred life-times. I might have spent all the remainder of my days grinding out futile plausibilities in that fusty old place without ever discovering the glorious significance of Pragmatism if it hadn't been for the war." "But what," I interjected "can the war have to do with Pragmatism?" "Why just everything," he replied. "Of course I remember you didn't take Greats but you must have gathered in a general way what Pragmatism means."

"Why, yes," I replied, "I gathered that you Pragmatists held that the actual world of experience was a sort of jelly on which a man stamped his own meaning and personal purposes and that the truth of any statement depended on whether it worked." "Yes," he broke in "You've got the gist of the idea quite right. Truth is what works. But works for what? The one weak spot in pre-war Pragmatism was its failure to give a really convincing answer to that question. With a sudden flash of illumination, war, the intensest of all human purposes, brought the needed answer: Truth is what helps to win the war. Directly I realised the supreme significance of this judgment, I saw also how famously it fitted on to that political philosophy of State Absolutism which came to us from Hobbes not from the charlatan, Hegel, as the men of Balliol so falsely taught, I had discovered what Pragmatism was really 'for'. I felt myself a man with a mission, and immediately offered to put at the disposal of the Government a general scheme for the production and distribution of war-truth, substituting a really scientific method for the clumsy empiricism of their censorship and war-news department."

"Well, I gather that they took you on, though I must say the project seems on first view to have an uncommonly German look. They have made you manager of a sort of Wahrheits-Fabrik I suppose from the large lettered inscription over your door 'Psychological Laboratory for the Preparation of War-Truth.' I must confess that your whole conception of war-truth is a little disturbing to an old-fashioned fogey like myself."

"Well," Paston spoke a little warmly, "we are all put upon war bread why not war truth? If you reflect, you will realise that the analogy is just and even necessary. As Emerson so beautifully expresses it 'The laws above are

sisters of the laws below.' It is, indeed, the philosophic harmony that gives validity to all our spiritual war-processes. This you would better understand if I explain the fuller military service of which I am only a divisional commander." "Well, go ahead," I replied, "it's all new to me, and I want to understand."

And then he launched into the whole story of the Conscriptio of Mind. "Though quite early in the conflict we had pretended to regard it as a War of Ideas, it took several years before we were really prepared as a nation to mobilise upon this basis. We didn't see at first that in a War of Ideas the State must have complete control over the intellectual and moral resources of the nation. So for some years we went fumbling on with departmental censorship, continually overlapping or tripping one another up, and allowing all sorts of damaging talk and writing to go on because of foolish distinction made in Parliament between suppression of news and suppression of opinion. A Pragmatist would have pointed out at once, of course, the utter absurdity of the distinction as if there were any fact apart from its presentation and as if all presentation did not involve the personal equation of opinion. However, they went on some time suppressing and doctoring what they called 'news' and merely conniving at mob-violence for the suppression of inconvenient opinions."

"This loose sham-voluntarism lasted for several years before it was recognised how essential a war service it was to drill the whole intellectual and spiritual forces of the nation into complete harmony with the supreme purpose of a State at war. A joint conference of the leaders of the Churches, the Universities and the Press, was the instrument by which the War Council was at last induced to sanction a complete scheme of intellectual conscription, the natural concomitant of military and industrial conscription in that it placed the minds as well as the bodies of all persons under military discipline. Of course, in an informal sort of way, a good deal had already been done in our schools, universities and churches to bring them into line with the purpose of a patriotic culture, and a genuinely British Christianity. But much remained to be done, and I am vain enough to think that the word Pragmatism has proved of inestimable value, by supplying the really fundamental conception without which even the most bellicose of Deans or the most abject Master of a College would have spent his patriotic efforts to little purpose."

"And pray, what is that conception?" I asked perceiving that Paston was still labouring with undischarged information.

"Well," he went on, "it is the simple notion that truth is a raw material, infinitely malleable and adaptable to purposes of State. Once grasp that notion, and the full potentialities of our Psychological Laboratory will become quite clear. We begin by accepting the familiar distinction, true for me; false for you. This idea of the relativity and adaptability of knowledge is then generalised and applied in the processes of our laboratory, for producing out of the same raw material the separate truths which war requires for the home consumer, the ally, the neutral and the enemy. The crude fact is the same for all; everything depends upon the treatment."

"You would be surprised to learn how quickly it becomes a matter of laboratory routine. Here is the 'stuff' and there the recipient mind upon which a particular war impression is to be made. Given the analysis of the

recipient, it becomes merely a question of preparing and applying the requisite Alloy." "Alloy!" I exclaimed, "do you mean that you deliberately falsify the facts?" "Not at all," he replied a little warmly, "you do injustice to the delicacy of our art. It is our duty to compose the sort of news which it is good for the respective parties to receive, and to mould the sentiments and opinions it is good for them to hold. And then, when our expert taster says that we have got it just right, it is pumped into the news-agencies and the other publicity machines."

"But this," I interjected, "surely goes beyond all accepted usages of censorship even in war-time." "Censorship!" exclaimed Paston, "we have long discarded that foolish term, and the false stress is laid upon the inferior art of mere suppression. That work, of course, still has to be done. The public mind must not be allowed to be confused or depressed by information which, however accurate and even interesting is not nutritious. The same applies to all sorts of opinion and discussion. You would be interested, in fact, though possibly a little shocked, by the elaboration of our Index."

"You mean," I said, "pacifist and pro-German literature and that sort of thing!"

"Well no," he said, "I wasn't thinking of such obvious prohibitions. We have found it necessary to strike deeper at the roots of intellectual licentiousness. You will find on our forbidden list, therefore, such well known but mischievous works as Milton's *Areopagitica*, Locke's essay on *Toleration* and Mill's *Liberty*. Indeed, one of the members of our Board, the Dean of Brabourne, was anxious to proscribe the unexpurgated version of the New Testament; a good many copies of which are said still to be about. But the most important work in the department, as I have already intimated, falls to the Board of Intellectual Inventions. It is here that what I called the Alloys are prepared. The head of the office, my right-hand man is really top-hole creative artist. You may, perhaps, remember him—young Peters of Magdalen—who used to send in little sketches to the *Pink 'Un*. After that he drifted on to the *Daily Blank* where he made excellent practice for several years. In fact, the proprietor, Lord de Blank, who is head of our Advisory Committee, put him into this job. He is a perfect genius, such a light hand for the pastry, and quite a miracle for sauces."

"Aren't you," said I, "getting a little mixed in your metaphors? Just now it was alloys and chemistry, and now you seem to turn to cookery." "Well, never mind," Paston rejoined, "chemistry or cookery it's all one. The latter term reminds me that in the Board of Inventions we have an admirably staffed sub-department for the production of statistics. A certain section of the public, you see, is always eager for exact measured information and we have a clever little group of trained men from the School of Economics to give them what they want. But I have dared to reserve for myself the most delicate and interesting of all the jobs."

"And what," I said, "may that be?"

"Why, the manufacture of the Myth. Ah! I forgot; the vogue of Sorel and the Syndicalist idea came just after your time. Well to put it simply, the Myth is the mightiest of all inventions, the brazen image of a great spiritual achievement which will fire all men with enthusiasm and stimulate their utmost effort." "Yes," I said, "I think I

understand; something big and false to buck them up." "Well, not exactly," Paston replied, "the Myth cannot possibly be false, because, you see, 'it works.' Indeed it is supremely true." "Well," I said, "and what is your particular Myth?" "It is the mirage of a world Democracy rising *instanter* from the fumes of the blood-soaked battlefield. Whenever the vision gets a little dim, which happens sometimes as the war drags on, I get some great phrase-maker of our statesmen to put in a few new, bright touches, or sometimes a vigorous journalist will lend a hand. In one way or another we have managed, so far, to keep the fine old Myth in excellent repair. You have no notion what a lot of war-spirit it can be made to yield. When occasionally things look very black, I set to work myself and put some new allurements into the substance of the Myth."

"But I don't want to run on talking of my own special job when there are others doing such good work. Young Peters has a man who is perfectly splendid with the Explosives." "Why, what do you mean?"

"What should I mean? Material war, must, of course, have its close counter-parts in the war of ideas. In that little office the preparation of the intellectual bombs takes place. Whenever our expert observers report signs of a collapse in the war-spirit of the enemy, so that there seems a danger of a really serious peace offer, we hurl one of them across the ocean, a brand new economic boycott, or a fresh territorial demand. From time to time we vary these explosives by quieter but no less damaging infectives, poison gasses injected through the Press to pass through neutral sources into the mind of the enemy."

"I can't go into details here, but you can imagine we are pretty busy, what with our intellectual and moral bombing of the enemy and our soporifics and stimulants for the irritation and war-weariness at home."

"But there is one department of our work in which you will be particularly interested. The universities have behaved like trumps. As soon as they shed their early scruples about 'objective' facts and 'absolute reality' they took to the preparation of war-truth like ducks to water. Really splendid service, for example, has been rendered by their Joint Committee for Historical Reconstruction, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Norman Flower, whose famous monograph *How Blucher lost us Waterloo* has struck the shrewdest blow yet given to Prussian military prestige besides winning for its *etudite* author the Paris Academy medal *Pour la vraie verté*. I need hardly tell you that there is plenty of work to be done for our schools and colleges in re-writing history in the *entente spirit*, so as to delete the fabulous French wars and to put in its true light such episodes as that of Joan of Arc. But equally good service is done by them in the capacity of Disparagers."

"What are 'Disparagers'?" I interjected. "Why, the Committee for the Disparagement of German Learning. They have already got out some extremely damaging literature, Young Lewis of Balliol's *Seven Proofs for the Non-existence of Immanuel Kant* which took the Lord Mond prize last year has been published in eighteen languages for neutral service. Other pamphlets of conspicuous merit are Hyndman's *The Damnation of Karl Marx* and a lighter brochure by Lord Haldane entitled *How I Burnt My Spiritual Home*. The Anti-Hegel Society is now proposing as a subject for its next meeting *The Futility of Helmholtz*."

"A fine patriotic send-off to the whole campaign, of course, was given by the ceremonial burning of the German books from the Bodleian at the Martyrs' Memorial. Perhaps you will have read some account of it?"

"No. Everything you tell me is quite new and a little bewildering to one brought up in the older school of truth. But tell me, you have apparently demolished German philosophy and science but have you managed to do anything about German music?"

"Ah! Do you know that just there you have hit upon the most perplexing problem that has yet confronted our Disparagers. At first they were quite helpless in the matter, and were disposed to experiment upon the silly method of changing names. But they soon realised that it would take a full generation to substitute effectively the name of Hankinson for Mendelssohn or Stokes for Wagner and so they gave it up. Then somebody came out with a subtler suggestion of hiring third-rate orchestras to do their very worst in the Albert Hall, Queen's Hall and other popular resorts, with Beethoven, Brahms, and other Hun masters. This proposal was actually approved by the Board of Disparagement and a considerable fund was raised with the assistance of the Musicians' Mutual Benefit Society. Then came a quite unforeseen hitch. The first performances were rehearsed with care and given with really murderous effect. At least such was the intention. Unfortunately the more cultured musical public took the perverse fancy to treat the most excruciating passages as a novel and fascinating phase of what they termed futurist transvaluation; and so the Hun names that had been advertised for execration came to acquire a fresh lease of undeserved glory.

"But I must not bore you any further with our innumerable engagements and campaigns in the great War of Ideas."

"Nay," I replied, "far from boring me, you bring both interest and profit. For I seem to come a little nearer to finding the correct answer to Pilate's famous question."

NOTE: Without lending him our support it is permissible to point out that William James himself contested an interpretation of his views which this satire assumes to be representative.—Editor, *T. S. C.*

INFALLIBILITY

"Perhaps I had better inform my Protestant readers that the famous dogma of papal infallibility is by far the most modest pretension of the kind in existence. Compared to our infallible democracies, our infallible medical councils, our infallible astronomers, our infallible parliaments, the Pope is on his knees in the dust confessing his ignorance before God."

—G. B. Shaw.

THE BANKER-SOCIALIST PLOT

A four page leaflet consisting of extracts from matter published in *The Social Crediter* under the titles "The Unwanted Loan," "Contemporary Gibbonish," "The Conservative Party: Quo Vadis," "Great Britain and 'America,'" and "The Sky's the Limit" is available, price 1d., from K.R.P. Publications Ltd.

PARLIAMENT

(continued from page 3)

exercise its mandate beyond the endurance of the public, or bitterness will result, and may lead to civil war.

Hon. Members: Oh.

Mr. Kirkwood: What was that?

Viscountess Davidson: Yes, it is true. May I finish by quoting a sentence which appeared at the end of an article written by one of our best-known historians? He points out the danger of allowing the caucus to take to itself too great power, for all through history the result has been the same, disastrous. I apologise for reading the whole of it, but I would like the House to hear it:

"In recent years our senior civil servants, taking advantage of overburdened and too often inexperienced legislators, have introduced into Bills about to come before Parliament Clauses giving themselves judicial powers over their own actions. Such powers would have made the hair stand up on the outraged heads of Victorian constitutional historians and philosophers, who never tired of proudly pointing out that it was the absence of any special *Droit administratif* that saved Britain from the fate of the Continental tyrannies. Their diagnosis of the weakness inherent in so many European States was, of course, perfectly correct. Since their time we have seen that weakness produce terrible and almost unimaginable results. Belsen was the ultimate consequence of bestowing super-legal powers on the executive and the separation of political power from moral right. When Germans today declare that they could not prevent what was being done in their joint name at Belsen and Buchenwald, they are probably far nearer the truth than we give them the credit for being. Their offence was not so much that they let their executive commit frightful crimes against human justice and decency as that they had long allowed to their executive the right and power to do whatever it pleased to do. Let us see to it that we do not make the same mistake, or—if we have already made it—that we undo it before it is too late."

House of Commons, May 1, 1946.

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE BILL.

Sir Henry Morris-Jones (Denbigh): . . . He may be interested to know that at the conference in London last night the panel doctors expressed themselves unanimously against any salary at all, and I think they came to a wise decision. It is to their credit that they came to that decision, and I ask the right hon. Gentleman now, whether he will not drop the salary altogether from the terms of service, because the whole medical profession, and those associated with them, regard the salary as placing them immediately in the position of State servants. And so it does. . . .

On the question of compensation, I do not wish to say anything about the amount; I do not think anybody could quarrel about the amount, but I understand that the doctors are against compensation altogether. Therefore, I am not for the moment questioning the amount of compensation. What I am questioning is the suggestion that there is any need for compensation. Doctors prefer to retain their practice asset.

. . . Because of this alleged maldistribution of medical men the right hon. Gentleman is imposing directions under this Bill. There is direction under this Bill both negative and positive. It is the first time that direction has been imposed under a statute of this country, on any body of its people as a permanent measure. The negative direction is that no medical man or woman will be allowed, except by the consent of the committee—which will be the Minister—to remove from the place where he or she happens to be

when the Act comes into force. They will not be able to remove from that locality without the consent of the committee. Not only that, but no one fresh to the profession will be allowed to go into any area without the consent of the Committee or the Minister.

Dr. Taylor: That is not true.

Sir H. Morris-Jones: Those are the facts.

Dr. Taylor: There is only one ground on which the committee can withhold consent, and that is that there are too many doctors in the area already.

Sir H. Morris-Jones: That does not make any difference to my contention, that it is within the power of the Minister and the committee to refuse consent to any medical man or woman to remove from where he or she may be.

Lieut.-Colonel Gage (Belfast, South): I feel that I shall command a large measure of agreement in this House when I say that the only point of view from which this Bill should be approached is the point of view of what is the best for the patient. . . .

. . . I would have preferred to have seen the global sum of £66 million, which is to be spent in the compensation of elderly practitioners, used for providing security for the young man at a time when he needs it, which as my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Croydon (Mr. Willink) said, is before he is qualified. . . .

Anglo-Saxon Commentary

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Since William came to England
And broke the Saxon spears,
No sword has conquered England
For nigh a thousand years.
Yet captive now is England
Her neck beneath their heel
Who won with words an England
They could not win with steel.
A pall hangs over England
Of calumny and lies
And whoso speaks for England
Some alien decries.
Can no one stir up England?
Can none with tongue and pen
Shake up and wake up England
And rouse the English men?
Till with a shout of "England!"
Above the wordy din
They drive right out of England
The enemy within.

Westminster, May 10, 1946.

EXCALIBUR.

Masonic Privileges

Attention has been drawn to clauses in the Government of Ireland Act, 1920:—

"65 (1) It is hereby declared that existing enactments relative to unlawful oaths or unlawful assemblies in Ireland do not apply to the meetings or proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland, or of any Lodge or Society recognised by that Grand Lodge.

"(2) Neither the Parliament of Southern Ireland nor the Parliament of Northern Ireland shall have power to abrogate or affect prejudicially any privilege or exemption of the Grand Lodge of Freemasons in Ireland, or any Lodge or Society recognised by that Grand Lodge which is enjoyed either by law or custom at the time of the passing of this Act. And any law made in contravention of this provision shall, so far as it is in contravention of this provision, be void."

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